

**From:** [Caulley, Jamie](#)  
**To:** [Draft EIS Feedback;](#)  
**CC:**  
**Subject:** comments on columbia river crossing  
**Date:** Thursday, May 29, 2008 8:26:38 AM  
**Attachments:**



- P-0693-001** | This email is in my response to the Columbia River Crossing proposals.
- P-0693-002** | As a North Portland resident, I am opposed to any plan that encourages automotive traffic, does not include light rail, and does not include a toll. I am also opposed to any plan where the State of Washington does not share 50% of the cost.
- P-0693-003** | The solution must include a long-term plan to pay for the project (ie a toll), a means to discourage automotive transportation (ie again toll, lightrail, pedestrian/bike paths and minimal car lane increase), be environmentally concious and maintain 1-5 and Columbia river shipping needs.
- P-0693-004** |
- P-0693-005** | I would also support a plan to add a toll immediately to the present bridge to create revenue to pay for a better researched solution.

Sincerely,

Jamie M. Caulley  
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**P-0693-001**

Preferences for specific alternatives or options, as expressed in comments received before and after the issuance of the DEIS, were shared with local sponsor agencies to inform decision making. Following the close of the 60-day DEIS public comment period in July 2008, the CRC project's six local sponsor agencies selected a replacement I-5 bridge with light rail to Clark College as the project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). These sponsor agencies, which include the Portland City Council, Vancouver City Council, TriMet Board, C-TRAN Board, Metro Council, RTC Board, considered the DEIS analysis, public comment, and a recommendation from the CRC Task Force when voting on the LPA.

With the LPA, new bridges will replace the existing Interstate Bridges to carry I-5 traffic, light rail, pedestrians and bicyclists across the Columbia River. Light rail will extend from the Expo Center MAX Station in Portland to a station and park and ride at Clark College in Vancouver. Pedestrians and bicyclists would travel along a wider and safer path than exists today.

For a more detailed description of highway, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian improvements associated with the LPA, see Chapter 2 of the FEIS.

**P-0693-002**

Please refer to Chapter 4 of the FEIS for a description of the current plans for funding construction and operation of the LPA. This discussion provides an updated assessment of likely funding sources for this project, though it is not common practice to receive funding commitments prior to completion of the alternative selection process. As described in the FEIS, project funding is expected to come from a variety of local, state, and federal sources, with federal funding and tolls providing substantial revenue for the construction. As Oregon and

Washington businesses and residents will benefit from the project's multi-modal improvements, both states have been identified as contributors to the project. As jurisdictions on both sides of the river seek to encourage non-auto travel, tolls are not anticipated for bikes, pedestrians, and transit users. Lastly, CRC assumes funds allocated to other projects and purposes would remain dedicated to those projects and purposes.

**P-0693-003**

The DEIS discussed the potential impacts of the project alternatives on the natural environment, including fish and other aquatic and terrestrial species (Section 3.14 of the DEIS and the Ecosystems Technical Reports). Impacts to fish, wildlife, and habitat as a result of constructing the CRC project were similar among all alternatives analyzed in the DEIS. The DEIS analysis of potential impacts to threatened and endangered species was coordinated with the federal agencies that implement the Endangered Species Act – the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), The analysis was also coordinated with the Washington and Oregon state departments of fish and wildlife. The ESA, as well as NMFS and USFWS, do not require the completion of a Biological Assessment prior to a DEIS. The information available in the DEIS and related technical reports aided the project's local partner agencies in selecting a LPA.

Since the publication of the DEIS, a Biological Assessment was prepared and submitted that provided more detailed impact analysis for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. It addressed hydroacoustic impacts and stormwater treatment and other potential impacts to species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Based upon the evaluation of this Assessment, NMFS and USFWS issued a Biological Opinion that the project will not likely jeopardize the continued existence or adversely modify the habitat of a listed threatened or

endangered species. See Chapter 3 (Section 3.16) of the FEIS for more discussion on ecosystem impact analysis and mitigation.

**P-0693-004**

The ability to efficiently move freight in the Vancouver/Portland region is critical to the overall health of our economy. As such, the CRC project is designed to improve freight mobility on I-5, as well as make it safer and easier for trucks to get on and off I-5 to reach businesses and Port facilities. The Freight Working Group, comprised of representatives of the Vancouver-Portland metropolitan area's freight industry, met several times throughout the process to advise and inform the Columbia River Crossing project team about freight issues. The group provided insight, observation, and recommendation about the needs for truck access and mobility within the corridor; characterized the horizontal and vertical clearances, acceleration/deceleration, and stopping performance needs of trucks that must be accommodated; and provided meaningful comments on the effect of geometric, regulatory, and capacity changes on truck movements in the corridor. See Chapter 3 (Section 3.1) of the FEIS for a discussion of how the project increases freight mobility and access.

Regarding river freight, as discussed in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2) of the DEIS, the Columbia River and the North Portland Harbor are designated Federal Navigable Waterways, and therefore the U.S. Coast Guard must approve construction or alteration of the I-5 bridges. During hours where bridge lifts are restricted (weekdays, between 6:30 and 9:00 a.m. and between 2:30 and 6:00 p.m.), vessels must either wait or make relatively sharper turns in a short stretch of river and use channels that may have lower height clearance, narrower width, or shallower depths, which represents a safety hazard. The project team, in consultation with the Coast Guard, established a vertical minimum of 95 feet clearance, so that new structures could be built without a lift-span. Higher vertical clearances would have violated restricted airspace for flight navigation.

Under the No-Build Alternative, the lift span restrictions would continue to cause delays and potential hazards to river traffic. The CRC project, as proposed, will require fewer piers, creating less of an obstacle to river navigation than either the existing crossing or the supplemental crossing. Taller ships would not be restricted by the hours of lift-span operation, and would not have to navigate a difficult path around the lift-span channel.

**P-0693-005**

Modeling has indicated that tolling I-5 without making the improvements that are part of the CRC project would not meet the project's Purpose and Need. This does not mean that some form of tolling prior to constructing CRC couldn't be implemented. The ultimate decision on any tolling options will be made by both the Washington and Oregon Transportation Commissions.